

## **THE CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A method of processing a catalog of electronic programming information containing information for at least one program, said information including a start time and an end time of said at least one program, said method comprising:
  - obtaining a first value representing characteristics data of said at least one program at said start time; and
  - storing said first value in said catalog; and
  - obtaining a second value representing characteristics data of said at least one program at said end time; and
  - storing said second value program in said catalog;
  - when a user selects said at least one program for a use by a device with a program input, copying said first value and said second value to said device ;
  - comparing said first and second value to corresponding values obtained from said program input to determine a start and stop time for said use.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said program is a carried by a video signal source.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said use for said program includes said device displaying said program.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said use for said program includes said device recording said program.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is a signature generated by using a combination of features from a frame of said program.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is a color histogram generated from a frame of said program.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is generated from closed captioning data gathered from a frame of said program.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is generated from the audio portion from one or more frames of said program.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is a signature generated for a block of discrete cosine values for a frame.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is obtained from low level features.

11. A method of processing a catalog of electronic programming information containing information for at least one program, said information including a start time and an end time of said at least one program, said method comprising:

obtaining a first value representing characteristics data of an ending of a program immediately preceding said at least one program; and

storing said first value in said catalog; and

obtaining a second value representing characteristics data of said at least one program at said end time; and

storing said second value program in said catalog;

when a user selects said at least one program for a use by a device with a program input, copying said first value and said second value to said device ;

comparing said first and second value to corresponding values obtained from said program input to determine a start and stop time for said use.

12. The method of claim 11, where said program is carried by a video signal source.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein said use for said program includes said device displaying said program.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein said use for said program includes said device recording said program.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is a signature generated by using a combination of features from a frame of said program.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is a color histogram generated from a frame of said program.

17. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is generated from closed captioning data gathered from a frame of said program.

18. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is generated from the audio portion from one or more frames of said program.

19. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics of said DCT blocks is a signature generated for a block of DCT values for a frame.
20. The method of claim 11, wherein said value representing characteristics data gathered from said program is obtained from low level features.
21. A method of processing a catalog of electronic programming information containing information for at least one program, said information including a start time and an end time of said at least one program and the end time for an immediately temporarily preceding program, said method comprising:
  - obtaining a first value representing characteristics data of an ending of a program immediately preceding said at least one program; and
  - storing said first value in said catalog; and
  - obtaining a second value representing characteristics data of said at least one program at said start time; and
  - storing said second value program in said catalog;
  - when a user selects said at least one program for a use by a device with a program input, copying said first value and said second value to said device;
  - comparing said first value to corresponding value obtained from said program input to determine a time when said immediately temporarily preceding program ends;
  - next comparing said second value to corresponding value obtained from said program input to determine time for said use to begin.
22. A system for processing a catalog of electronic programming information, in which said catalog contains information for a program, wherein a start time and end time of said

program is stored, in which said program is represented by characteristics data gathered from said program, said system comprising:

a video signal source of said program; and

a processor operatively coupled to said video signal source, said processor coupled to a electronic programming guide, and coupled to a user selection device, and logic output means; said processor configured to:

obtain a user programming selection from said user selection device; and

obtain said characteristic data, program channel selection, and program start and end time from said electronic programming guide containing said catalog; and

monitor said video signal source at time proximal to said program start time, comparing said characteristic data with complimentary characteristic data generated from video signal source; and

(a) when said characteristic data is equivalent to said complimentary characteristic data generated from video signal source, set logic output means to TRUE, and stop performing said comparison; or

(b) otherwise set logic output means to FALSE and continue performing said comparison on video signal source.

23. The system of claim 22, further comprising

monitor said video signal source at time proximal to said program end time, comparing said characteristic data with complimentary characteristic data generated from video signal source; and

(a) when said characteristic data is equivalent to said complimentary characteristic data generated from video signal source, set logic output means to FALSE, and stop performing said comparison; or

(b) otherwise set logic output means to TRUE and continue performing said comparison on video signal source.

24. The system of claim 22, wherein said processor is further operatively connected to a device for further processing said program, wherein a TRUE value for said logic output means causes said processor to turn on said device to the channel of said program.

25. The system of claim 24, further comprising that a FALSE value said logic output means causes said processor to turn off said device for further processing.